



GAO

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United States General Accounting Office  
Washington, DC 20548

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June 30, 2005

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.  
Ranking Minority Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives

Dear Mr. Conyers:

Concerning your letter of May 5, 2005, to the Comptroller General requesting GAO work on the various trust funds and programs established to compensate individuals for harm caused by exposure to dangerous materials and products, we met with your staff on June 6, 2005 to confirm the direction of this study. Please see enclosure I for the list of requesters with whom we will be coordinating this assignment.

The purpose of this letter is to set forth our study objectives and provide you with a completion date for the design phase of this project. The overall objectives of the assignment will be to determine (1) the length of time and cost of establishing and administering the Black Lung Benefits Program, the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program, and the Radiation Compensation Program; (2) the claims histories of the programs, including the number and percentage of claims approved and denied; and (3) delays experienced by beneficiaries in obtaining payment for approved claims. We expect the design phase to be completed by the end of July 2005. We will remain in contact with your staff and, at that time, will brief you on our progress to date and provide you with a completion date for the study.

Sincerely yours,

Robert E. Robertson, Director  
Education, Workforce, and  
Income Security Issues

## LIST OF REQUESTERS

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.  
Ranking Minority Member  
Committee on the Judiciary  
(Staff Members: Perry Apfelbaum/  
Michone Johnson)  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Melvin L. Watt  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Robert Wexler  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Robert C. Scott  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Chris Van Hollen  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Linda T. Sanchez  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Jerrold Nadler  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Adam Smith  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Sheila Jackson Lee  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Anthony D. Weiner  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives

**LIST OF REQUESTERS**

The Honorable Maxine Waters  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Martin T. Meehan  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives

The Honorable William D. Delahunt  
Committee on the Judiciary  
United States House of Representatives